

**TOWN OF WALPOLE
STAFF MEETING
OCTOBER 15, 2020**

Selectboard Present: Peggy Pschirrer (Chair); Cheryl Mayberry; Steven Dalessio

Staff Present: Sarah Downing (Manager of Administration); Richard Kreissle (Administrator of Finance); Michael Paquette (Chief Police Department); Justin Sanctuary (Lt. Police Department); Ben Hoy (Recycling Director); Michael Rau (Road Agent/Highway Department); Helen Dalbeck (Hooper Institute Executive Director); Kraig Harlow (Recreation Director); Jane Malmberg (Library Director)

Excused: Sandra Smith (Town Clerk/Tax Collector)

CALL TO ORDER: Mrs. Pschirrer called this Staff Meeting to order at 5:00 PM in the Walpole Town Hall and announced it is so nice to see everyone here. It was a beautiful day. Hopefully some people got out to enjoy the weather. We do need rain!

We have a new person present at this meeting. Mrs. Jane Malmberg is the new Library Director and has been working for the Town for four weeks. Mrs. Pschirrer asked the Department Managers to go around the room to introduce themselves, mention their department and what they do.

Mrs. Pschirrer explained the staff and Selectboard meet monthly. There will be another 2021 Budget all-day meeting in December. As the Department Managers give their reports tonight, she asked them to mention what they think they will need that will require a Warrant Article. They have scheduled the 2021 Annual Town Meeting for March 13, 2021. It will be held in the Walpole Elementary School Gym because we can be more socially distanced there. She assumes we will still be wearing masks and social distancing in March. Today there was a new announcement by Representative Lucy Weber that we have a new COVID-19 case in Town. We do not know who. That information is kept confidential. Cheshire County has seen an increase so we are now a "pink" county. If anyone feels they have been exposed, they should get a test. If your doctor orders the test, HealthTrust will pay for it. Don't let money keep you from getting a test. That is important.

Police Department: Police Chief Michael Paquette and Lt. Justin Sanctuary were present. Chief Paquette had distributed copies of Police Stats for the period of September 16, 2020 through October 14, 2020. They had 382 Total Calls during this period of time. Total Motor Vehicle Calls were 95; Public Safety Calls were 193; and Criminal Investigation Calls were 94. They are now collecting traffic data on Watkins Hill and are getting some good stats. If the Selectboard would like them to do another report similar to the one submitted last month, they will do another one. It included times of day, etc. The speed monitoring sign was on Main Street in North Walpole. There is a problem on Mountain View with one or two people. Mr. Dalessio would like to see this information "boiled down" so it could be put in the Clarion. Chief Paquette noted if people are going below the speed limit, the speed unit will not come on. County Road was done last summer. Chief Paquette mentioned they had an air quality test but did not hear about the results. Mrs. Downing replied that there was no test; UV lights and filters were installed in air vents to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19. The Town Hall, Library, Police Station and a few other locations were done. Chief Paquette said the radios are being programmed; he hopes they will be able to distribute the radios to the officers in the next few weeks. The new vests came in. Their generator needed to be fixed. Mark Houghton ordered the part and took care of it. There has been a good deal of vandalism through the Village especially to political signs of both parties. South Street had some derogatory messages on signs. There have been paintings on the roads. NH DOT took care of South

Street. He continues to see some vandalism in yards but recently they have not had anything further. They are doing some stationary and regular patrols on North Road as someone had been yelling obscenities at night. The department is still very busy. There are on-going investigations with drugs, alcohol, simple assaults, domestic arguments, etc. People are still cooped up. Lt. Sanctuary wanted to thank the Fire Department for two fire extinguishers. The department had put out a fire in a train car that had people involved. Mrs. Pschirrer mentioned they will want a new cruiser which will be a part of their vehicle rotation.

Recycling Center: Mr. Ben Hoy had submitted the Walpole Recycling/Reuse Center Staff Meeting Report.

- Grand Opening of the new Reuse Center on Saturday, October 10th was a huge success!! Michael Nerrie informed him that more donation revenue was made on their first day than what was typically made in one month at the old Reuse Center.
- It was unique that they used the old tree when building the new Reuse Center. The Ribbon Cutting ceremony was a lot of fun. The Reuse Center means there will be more work for the employees.
- Donation money to be split 50/50 between the Fall Mountain Food Shelf and Fall Mountain Friendly Meals. All checks to be made out to the Town of Walpole at the new Reuse Center.
- Friends of the Library received several donations at the Reuse Center grand opening. All hardcover books are \$2/\$1 for other books. Donations to benefit Friends of the Walpole Library.
- Thank you to all of the wonderful community minded volunteer support in stocking shelves to prepare for the opening of the Reuse Center.
- Michael Neerie is coordinating volunteer Reuse Center sign up shifts. Please check out their Walpole NH Recycling Center website, and email Michael with questions pertaining to volunteering. They need volunteers to keep the new Reuse Center open!! Reuse Center is now open year round!!

Mrs. Pschirrer advised it is an incredible new Reuse Center. Everyone should take a look at it. It is clean, new and spacious. There are all kinds of good items in it.

Mr. Hoy worked with volunteers, some from the Savings Bank of Walpole, on a clean-up to pick up tires. They picked up 125 tires. It was a fun time. He thanked all the volunteers that helped. He noted that Mrs. Kara Dexter deserves recognition for being a dedicated volunteer for all the clean-up work she does in the entire Town. She will stay at a site all day long to make sure the job is finished. They are staying very busy. Mrs. Pschirrer asked if Mr. Hoy is thinking about what he will want next year. He will start thinking about it.

Walpole Library: Mrs. Jane Malmberg had submitted the following written Library Report for October 2020:

There are no updates to service at the library at this point. They have noticed a slight uptick in the number of library users visiting the library and checking their materials this past month. Downloadable books and audiobooks continue to be popular. The library has seen an increase in visits to their website and Facebook page.

Julie continues to offer Wiggle Time and Story Times outside, weather permitting, and via Facebook Live on stormy days. She has also begun to offer a Virtual Code Club activity via their website.

The library will be offering a Walpole Area Adventure Hunt for all ages in October as well as an adult make-and-take activity.

Thanks to the generosity of Michael and Kathy Nerrie, they now have a more permanent and aesthetically pleasing installation for their Story Walk at Distant Hill Gardens and Nature Trail. A new book will be featured each month.

Jane has joined a committee tasked with making a plan for opening the North Walpole branch of the library. They have had several meetings and are developing plans for upgrading the library's computers, cataloguing the collection and expanding the hours of operation. She is working on plans for upgrading computers at the main library as well. Mrs. Pschirrer feels this is good news for North Walpole. They will promote this so people in North Walpole know the Library will be open more frequently and have some evening hours.

Patrons have been very happy to be able to reserve materials once again via ILL. It does take a bit longer to process these requests as the state now requires that these books be quarantined for 5 days.

Mrs. Malmberg also provided numbers for September 2020 and September 2019 for the following:

- Library Visits & Hours Open
- Check Outs
- WiFi & Computer Use
- Programs & Attendance
- Website Email, Social Media
- Database Usage

She also became aware that their Ancestry shortcut on the public pc was not working correctly. This may have led to the inactivity this past year (in addition to their being closed). She has corrected this.

Walpole Recreation: Mr. Kraig Harlow had submitted the following Walpole Recreation Update 10/15/2020. He feels that everything is going very well.

Pool:

- The pool cover has been put on the pool
- Houghton has shut off the water to the pool and pool house.
- They are looking into estimates to get the pool roof repaired by the end of the year.

Soccer:

- The soccer season is ending Saturday, October 17th.
- Teams were made of Drewsville, Walpole, and North Walpole residents-only and had 64 total kids sign up.
- The program generated a little over \$1,150 dollars for the program.
- Teams were sponsored by local businesses this season and t-shirts were provided to each player.
- Teams practiced once a week and played a scrimmage against each other every Saturday for the six weeks at North Walpole School.
- Every coach followed the COVID-19 guidelines we provided at the beginning of the season and they did not have to shut down for the season.
- Middle School practices were held at Walpole Elementary School on Friday nights.
- Thank you to Fall Mountain for allowing them to continue to use the soccer fields.

North Walpole Park:

- Diane held an alternative fall get together event on October 3rd, where families and businesses dropped scarecrows at the park. Mrs. Pschirrer advised there are rows of scarecrows along the entire fence; it is fun to see.
- Currently, they are looking into quotes right now to replace the shed roof at the park.

- The current quote through Long’s General Contracting & Roofing is a shingle roof for \$1,580 or \$2,150 for a metal roof.

Tennis:

- They have decided to go with Wilson & Lawrence to repair the tennis court.
- The estimate for repairs to the tennis court was \$5,795 dollars. This would be covered under the Repair & Maintenance Fund.
- Due to the drastic change in temperature the past couple of weeks repairs cannot be done this fall but Walpole Recreation is the first in line for spring.
- The court should not see significant damages through the winter even without a repair.

Basketball:

- They have purchased 12 thermometers through the CARES Act for the possibility of having a basketball season.
- The Recreation Committee will be meeting on October 25th, to discuss options for basketball this winter.

Community Events:

- The Recreation Committee plans on meeting and discussing possible community events for the winter and spring.

Mr. Harlow understands that High School sports will not start until after the first of the year 2021. This is dependent on COVID-19.

Highway Department: Mr. Michael Rau had submitted the following October 2020 written report. They have finished roadside mowing for the season in both Walpole and North Walpole. It took about 2 months to complete. They have been receiving many phone calls and emails with positive feedback with how it came out. Michael Symonds continues to do a great job with the use of the tractor and roadside mowing equipment each year We appreciate his effort. Before they bought their own equipment they rented it; it was expensive and quite often they did not have enough rental time to do the entire Town. Mrs. Pschirrer said it is nice people are noticing positive things.

Poirier Guidelines came and line painting was completed on Main Street, Drewsville Road, Valley Road, March Hill Road, Maple Grove Road, North Road, and Barnett Hill Road. Lines are painted at night to avoid traffic and to ensure good, quality results. Thank you to Paul Clark for coming in on this night to oversee the project.

Catch basin cleaning was done in both Walpole and North Walpole Villages. They cleaned about 200 catch basins. They will be doing ditching of the dirt roads. The average is two feet deep but many roads are different. They ditch every year usually in the fall. They are getting a new air compressor. All dirt roads were graded, raked, and rolled. They are prepping them for winter.

Mrs. Pschirrer has noticed all the roads that have been painted with lines and she approves of that. The lines really help especially where there are no lights at night such as on Barnett Hill Road and March Hill Road.

Mr. Rau mentioned that next year he would like to get a new truck. Ms. Mayberry reported that under the Highway Block Grant funds the Town can buy a new truck to be used on the highways. Mr. Dalessio said the advantage is they can purchase the truck six months earlier than waiting for approval at the next Town Meeting. Mrs. Pschirrer noted they hope to get their new tax rate next week and they will know what their Unassigned Fund balance will be. Mr. Rau estimates the cost of the new truck would be approximately \$200,000.

Mr. Rau clarified that if a sign is in their way, they pick them up, keep them at the Highway Garage for about a week but if they are not picked up, they get rid of them. Sometimes people ask where they can put signs. At this time, there are a lot of political signs.

Hooper Institute: Mrs. Helen Dalbeck submitted the following Director's Report – October 15, 2020:
School Programs: They are mostly teaching outside in the school gardens, woods, high tunnel and school yards. Their topics are focused on harvesting, beginning the preparation of beds for the winter, and planting in the high tunnel for winter greens. The student lessons cover migration, soils, and trees in autumn, botany, insects and the mammals that are challenging their garden skills...the meadow voles, chipmunk, deer and one very fat groundhog.

Outreach and Marketing: Facebook, school based email, The Clarion and Walpolean, Friends of Hooper Institute. A new Hooper Institute logo is in development with local artist Laura Dunbar. Mrs. Dalbeck is excited about this.

Facility: The sugar maple tree is nearly all removed. Main building roof repairs are scheduled for early winter as well as full shed roof replacement. A renovated alarm system with some new bells and whistles will be installed this fall by Countryside Alarm. Field mowing was done on Sept. 29. Kevin Healey has begun to tackle some odd jobs, such as taking apart the street sign for a new coat of paint and rotten ladder repair in their crawl space, to name a few.

Administration: Budget for 2021 in process. Board met 10/5/2020.

Walpole Community Garden: An all member clean-up is scheduled for October 31, 10 am – 12 pm.

Wreath Making: Mrs. Dalbeck has started preparing for a Wreath Making class.

Respectfully submitted and thanks to all for your support, Helen Dalbeck.

Mrs. Pschirrer advised it has been a busy time of the year for them making preparations for the winter and for winter plantings. Mr. Dalessio mentioned Mrs. Dalbeck has several wishes for next year but he suggested she explore heating the building year-round. Mrs. Pschirrer feels the Maintenance Fund can take care of that. They can prepare a good argument for the Office of Charitable Trust to request a heating system for the building. The next thing would be to make it handicapped accessible.

Finance Office: Mr. Richard Kreissle reported the Town received \$24,000+ from the CARES Act that they submitted on September 14th. Mark Houghton will install the radios in the Town Hall that will be used when it becomes an alternate Emergency Operations Center. Some money will go back to the Fire Department for hazardous pay and to Brad Nash for the sanitizing overtime. They are working on pushing the tax rate along. We are just waiting for figures from the Fire Department and Fall Mountain Region School District. We should have the preliminary tax rate next week. Mr. Dalessio asked how close are we to the allocated amount for the Cares Act. Mr. Kreissle advised we might be able to use it all. He has to calculate some numbers. Mr. Kreissle thanked the Selectboard for purchasing a laptop for him to work at home in case he has to go into quarantine. He will be working on the next submission of approximately \$21,000 to CARES on October 30th.

Selectboard Office: Mrs. Sarah Downing provided the Report to Selectboard and Staff – dated October 15, 2020:

Town Hall Update:

- Prep work has begun for the Nov. 3rd elections. Brad Nash has been very busy. A temporary ramp has been ordered for the Westminster Street entrance to the Town Hall. It will be installed a

week before Nov. 3rd. Those that decline or medically cannot use a mask will be voting in the north lobby inside the Town Hall.

- The ADA approved stair handrails have been ordered. They are to arrive between the end of this week or the beginning of next week. They are to be installed into the Elm Street steps. A platform to mitigate the set-down outside the Elm Street door has also been built and will be installed prior to Nov. 3rd. A plastic windbreak will also be installed at this exit.
- Ultraviolet lights have been installed within the heating output air vents. Filters with grill overlays have been placed in the intake vents. Both projects were paid with CARES Act funding for unexpected purchases related to COVID-19 virus prevention. Thanks to EE Houghton for quickly completing this project which included similar installations at several Town buildings.
- An emergency radio is being installed in the Town Hall. It would be used when the Town Hall becomes an alternate Emergency Operations Center (EOC). They are climbing through the cupola with wiring. The primary emergency center is the Walpole Fire Station.
- The search for a craftsperson and/or company to rebuild the wheels on the cannons on the Common is ongoing. Hopefully they will find somebody local.
- Much thanks to Brad Nash who has worked on or helped organize the above projects while keeping Town buildings clean and disinfected.

Water and Sewer:

- Water and sewer readings are completed for the 3rd quarter of 2020.
- Third quarter billing will be posted on the 30th of October.

Human Resources:

- The Employee Appreciation Box Lunches will be dropped off on Tuesday, Oct. 27th by Joanie Joan's Eatery. Sandwich wrap selection orders by department are due 10/15/2020.
- A reminder that all department managers are required to complete the online Harassment Awareness Training module by the end of 2020. Visit nhprimex.org to register for online training and the course.
- Annual notices will be either sent directly by Health Trust or the Selectboard Office within the next month. The open enrollment period to make changes to health insurance coverage will be sent out in first part of November.
- The Selectboard will be reviewing the new rates for health insurance coverage at the 10/15/2020 Selectboard Meeting.
- Employee funded/optional insurance options meetings will be happening in November. Small groups with COVID-19 protocols in place will be meeting with the AFLAC agents in the Town Hall.
- Department managers are to encourage employees to consider taking flu shots. For those that have not had flu shots in the past, this is the year to take the vaccine which will help reduce potential strain on medical services created by the COVID-19 virus.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Office – Staff Report October 15, 2020: Mrs. Pschirrer reported that Mrs. Smith was unable to be with us at this meeting. She has been very busy. Mrs. Smith is retiring on January 2nd, 2021, after working 38 years for the Town of Walpole.

Town Clerk has collected \$64,940.50 since the last Staff meeting.

The Municipal Agent fees were \$1,173.00.

They also collected \$106.50 in dog licenses.

They also collected \$20,359.30 for the State's share of the registrations.

Tax Collector has only collected \$28,073.68.

\$8,508.10 was for the 2018 lien. \$8,244.40 was for the 2019 Lien.

\$11,191.42 on the 2020 Spring tax bills.

These figures include interest and penalties, they also have a credit of \$129.76.

They are just waiting for the Tax Rate to be able to print tax bills!

They have had approximately 500 ballots requested, most have been mailed and some given at the time they receive the request.

The phone keeps ringing for appointments and election questions.

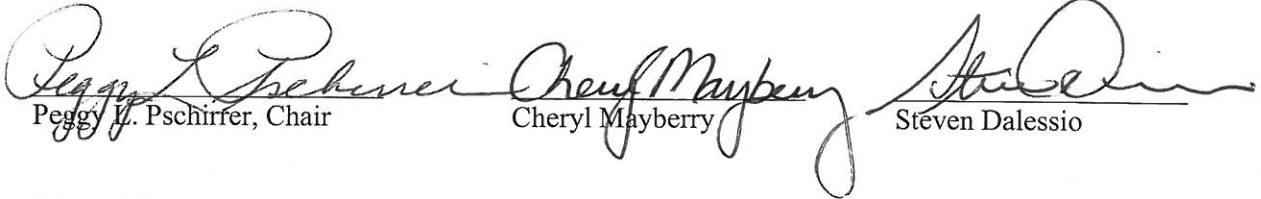
Meghan had last week off for a well-deserved vacation. Mrs. Smith is taking Wednesday afternoon and Thursday off; trying to use some of her vacation time before she retires in January. She will check in on Friday.

She would also like to thank Krystyna Marcom for all her help with these absentee ballots, she has been great! Mrs. Smith will not be at the Staff meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mrs. Pschirrer thanked everyone for attending this meeting. Stay Healthy!! Wear a mask, wash your hands and keep your distance. Mrs. Pschirrer adjourned this Staff meeting at 5:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary


Peggy J. Pschirrer, Chair Cheryl Mayberry Steven Dalessio

(Note: These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections will be found in the Minutes of the October 22, 2020, Selectboard meeting.)